

# Radon Action Week

**October 15-21, 2006**

Radon Action Week is October 15-21, 2006 (the third full week in October), and that means it's time to find out more about radon and how you can test your home for this tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas.



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Radon is a naturally occurring element found in almost any kind of soil or rock in at least trace amounts. When it moves to the outdoor air, it gets diluted and isn't much of a problem, but indoors it can accumulate to unhealthy levels, increasing our risk of lung cancer.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. (Only smoking causes more lung cancer deaths.) EPA estimates that approximately 21,000 lung cancers are caused by radon in the U.S. each year, and studies indicate that here in Michigan, radon may be responsible for more than 600 new lung cancers each year!

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Testing for radon is easy and inexpensive, and homes with elevated radon levels can be fixed. That means these lung cancers are preventable!

Radon levels vary from home to home, and the only way to know if *your* home has a problem is to test *your* home. If you don't know the radon level in your home, now is a good time to find out. Test your home for radon today! It's easier than holding your breath!



For more information on radon, visit your local health department or call the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Indoor Radon Program at 1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642) or 517-335-8037.

# Facts About Radon

- ◆ Radon Action Week is October 15-21, 2006!
- ◆ Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, resulting in more than 21,000 new lung cancers each year (more than 600 of those in Michigan alone!).
- ◆ It is a tasteless, odorless, colorless, radioactive gas that is naturally occurring in soil and rock.
- ◆ It enters buildings through openings in the foundation floor or walls (sump openings; crawlspaces; floor/wall joints; cracks; space around plumbing, wiring, or ductwork; etc.).
- ◆ It has no warning symptoms (it does not cause headaches, nausea, fatigue, etc.); the only known health effect is an increased risk of lung cancer!
- ◆ Nearly ONE in EIGHT Michigan homes would be expected to have an elevated radon level, and in some counties, more than 40% of the homes could have problems!
- ◆ If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is significantly increased.
- ◆ Testing is easy and inexpensive (test kits generally range from \$10 to \$20, and are *often even less expensive*)!
- ◆ The EPA recommended action guideline is 4 picocuries per liter of air (4 pCi/l). Homes with radon levels of 4 pCi/l or higher should be fixed.
- ◆ Test kits are available from county or city health departments (*generally* for \$10 or less), or from some hardware stores or home improvement centers (generally \$15-\$30).
- ◆ The only way to know if your home has an elevated radon level is to test! Test your home today!
- ◆ For more information, contact the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Indoor Radon Program at 1-800-RADON GAS (1-800-723-6642).